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Human Pioneering Pays Dividends

The Rev. Earl C. Osborn

Berlin, New Hampshire

A FEW weeks ago I delivered my sixteenth annual lecture on the American Negro. This year it was on Langston Hughes. It was the story of his life as contained in his autobiography "The Big Sea," a resume of his novel "Not Without Laughter," and the use of a number of his poems, from "Spittoons" to "Love is Like a Rose." Last year it was "The Negro's Contribution to "Poetry." Another year, "The Negro as a Soldier," and another, "George Washington Carver," etc.

Let me answer the question, "How did you become interested in the American Negro?" When I entered the Christian ministry, my towering ambition was to be a prophet. I wanted to thunder like Amos and pour out philippics like Jeremiah. Yet, at the same time I wanted to be popular. I wanted people to love me. My first great crusade was with that "noble experiment," prohibition. My deacons, not wanting me to offend, advised caution, and the preaching of the "simple gospel." I looked about for another cause. There was War and Peace right on my doorstep. I became a pacifist and called on the nations "to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks." The nations did not listen,—neither did my congregation. I soon discovered they all hated war, but they disliked pacifists. So my problem was still with me, how to be a prophet and have people love me. Then I discovered by chance one day that a mere fraction of one per cent of the people of New Hampshire were colored. In that hour I knew I had found a cause about which I could thunder and still retain the love and respect of my dear people.

I

That is one answer. I suppose the real answer is "I don't know." It is always difficult to trace the source of our deepest interests. The majority of men in the ministry don't know why they are there, or they do know, but it is the kind of knowledge that has no language. There is one thing I can say, that as I read more widely, I began to realize the vastness of the field. The urge to know grew upon me. My library began to expand. I discovered misconceptions concerning the negro—I wanted to do my bit to correct them. There were unexplored areas in the negro's life. The zest for new and fresh knowledge took hold on me.

I discovered that the negro was more than just an object of missionary interest. He was not just Uncle Tom or Booker T. Washington. He was not just a lazy, shiftless child, incapable of mental or moral development; on the other hand he was not W. E. Du Bois, representative extraordinary of the talented tenth. The American Negro was everything. There were no stereotypes. I searched in vain for the Negro of the minstrel stage. He wasn't there. I had always fitted Negroes into the physical categories of kinky hair, flat nose and balloon lips, but he didn't always fit. I discovered Edwin Embrie's "New Race." It began to dawn upon me that my own ignorance was my greatest obstacle to brotherhood. That holds true of white people in general.

This human pioneering began to do things to my mind and spirit. Economics had always been distasteful to me, but a desire to know how the Negro fitted into our economic pattern, in slavery days and after, started me on a long, long journey. I haven't come back. I found you couldn't keep people in an economic gutter without staying down there with them. It shocked me to learn that millions of my fellow countrymen were living on an economic dead level. I visited some of these areas of poverty and struggle, and felt the burning shame of it all. I began to wonder whether the Negro would go Communist. The C. I. O., by its policy of economic statesmanship and farsightedness, has answered that question in the negative. The long, hard fight of A. Philip Ran-

dolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, is beginning to bear fruit. The Negro is an American. His sweat and blood is in its soil. He wants change, radical change, but not revolution.

Lying close to the field of economics was politics. I had read my high school histories of the reconstruction days and my opinion of the Negro's political ability was pretty low. Later I read Claude Bower's "The Tragic Era" and my opinion hit a new low. But then I discovered that fascinating volume "Brown American" by Edwin Embrie, and close on to that "Black Reconstruction" by Du Bois, and as a result did some re-thinking on that whole post war era. Black politicians were no worse than white politicians. There were Boss Tweed of reconstruction days and Huey Long of our day, and it is common belief that their politics were rather bad. In fact the Negro politician was a poor piker in comparison. It is true that most of the Negroes were not prepared to vote, and not qualified for the positions they held. Nevertheless there were able leaders like John M. Langston, John R. Lynch and H. R. Revels, members of Congress, who brought distinction to their race. The moral and political leadership of Frederick Douglass was notable indeed. The reconstruction period was not altogether black in any sense of the word.

II

This study of the Negro began to do things to my social gospel. It lifted it out of the realm of glittering generalities into the field of concreteness. I do not mean to say I harped on the race question. In fact I seldom mentioned it, but it was always there in the background, saving me from vague abstractions. Economics in general will not do much for preaching, except bore a congregation, but economics in the terms of human suffering and struggle will stir the heart and move the will. A discourse on political science will put the average congregation to sleep. The picture of a large segment of our American people robbed of their constitutional rights by fear of violence and political trickery stirs to righteous indignation. You cannot feel the heart beat of a great people without putting the throb of it into your preaching. What labor and capital—war and peace—temperance and social righteousness were doing for some preaching, the race issue was doing for mine. It was being saved from a certain glibness and the magic phrases of a utopian gospel. It was adding hard, cold facts to passion. It was giving a prophetic ring to my message. There was iron in this gospel, but also the overtone of an everlasting mercy.

In case of any misunderstanding, let me say here that my preaching has always been evangelistic. I believe you must have new men to make a new world. Social repentance must begin with the individual. But my study of the race question has led me to see the folly of such statement as, "Convert men and everything will take care of itself. Just make men Christian and all our social problems will evaporate." Such conceptions leave out of consideration the various brands of Christians. It ignores education and the growth of the soul. Jesus had no direct word of condemnation for slavery. Paul sends Onesimius back to his Master. In most places in the New Testament the word servant should be translated slave. For many centuries in many lands Christianity and slavery have been quite compatible. It was factual material, such as this, that saved my preaching, from the naïvety of most popular evangelism. It helped to merge the prophet and the evangelist into one man, with one all-inclusive message.

III

Another by-product of this human pioneering is a cure for that dread disease "smattering." The tendency of the homiletic mind is "to ride off in all directions." The minister should read widely, but not everything. He should be brave enough to say to that omnivorous reader in his parish, "I never read that book." The minister will be an authority in the religious field. Deliver us from the preacher who is better known for his knowledge of flowers than his knowledge of God. Yet, he should be well informed in other fields besides that of religion. For some men it will be science—for some international affairs—for others special aspects of literature. I know one rural

minister who has built up an extensive library in the field of scientific farming. He doesn't tell his congregation how to raise cabbages, but that knowledge of the good earth pervades his preaching. So this direct channeling of one's interests into particular areas saves the mind from "smattering" and the spirit from a cultural veneer.

Here is an example of what I am trying to say—My knowledge of poetry was a "smattering." It consisted of knowing bits of this and that. I could quote "Flower in the Crannied Wall" and "New Occasions Teach New Duties" along with "Stone Walls Do Not a Prison Make." I had a fair knowledge of Tennyson and Whittier. Clark's "Quotable Poems" was at my right hand. It was my interest in the Negro that led into the deep places of poetry. Poetry ceased to be a "smattering" for homiletic adornment and became a harmony that sang its way into my soul.

It was James Weldon Johnson who first "spoke to my condition." I am glad it was Johnson I first discovered because he was free from bitterness and the strange ways of ultra-modern versifiers. "God's Trombones" became my delight. "Creation" and "The Funeral Sermon" represented great poetry and great preaching. Johnson could look at the South without animosity as we can see in the ringing stanzas of "O South land,"

"O South land, my South land,
O birth land, do not shirk,
The toilsome task nor respite ask,
But gird you for the work.

Remember, remember
That weakness stalks in pride;
That he is strong who helps along
The faint one at his side."

Next on my list of Negro poets came Paul Laurence Dunbar. Only a very few of his dialect poems appealed to me, like "When Malindy Sings" and "Con Pone's Hot," but in his little poem "Life" deep called unto deep:

"A crust of bread and a corner to sleep in,
A minute to smile and an hour to weep in,
A pint of joy to a peck of trouble,
And never a laugh but the moans come double:
And that is life!

A crust and a corner that love makes precious
With a smile to warm and the tears to refresh us:
And joy seems sweeter when cares come after,
And a moan is the finest of foils for laughter:
And that is life!"

Well, to make a long story short this interest took me back to the nameless singers in the days of slavery. I came to know that little Negro girl, Phillis Wheatley, who charmed Boston and the royal circle of London with her conversation and poetry. After Miss Wheatley came George Moses Horton and Mrs. Frances E. W. Harper. A good deal of this early poetry was imitative, but that was to be expected. Space forbids that I should name that host of Negroes who through their poetic gifts have expressed with sincerity and deep feeling the longings and hopes of their race. But he who would understand the Negro of today must know something of the poetry of Claude McKay, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Anna Bontemps—to name a few.

IV

Again, I discovered that human pioneering creates new interests. I have no ear for music. I am tone deaf. A few years ago I went to hear Rachmaninov play and was bored for two solid hours. Opera was agony to me. That which brought joy and enrichment to so many left me cold and poverty-stricken.

It was my interest in the Negro that introduced me to the world of music. If I were to understand the soul of this great race of people, I must cultivate a love for their music. It was not difficult. Who could resist the voices of Roland Hayes, Paul Robeson and Marian Anderson? My musical education came to include the names of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, Harry T. Burleigh, R. Nathaniel Dett, and William Grant Still. The marvelous beauty and soul-stirring power of

the spirituals took hold on me. Then came the day when I heard two hundred Negro students sing the "Hallelujah Chorus," and the tears ran down my face, and I was not ashamed. A large section of my soul which had been a barren desert began to blossom as a rose.

Blazing my own trail into this human wilderness I discovered Negro fiction, Negro art, Negro science. No pioneer of old ever received a greater thrill than I. I was getting into the Negro skin. I was sitting where he was sitting. He became my teacher. Under his tutelage I began to see that the Negro problem was not merely national but world-wide. I began to see for the first time that the world, for the most part, was composed of colored races. I was saved from the parochial mind.

Paul wrote long ago, "I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." I too am a debtor to all men, but especially to my brother under the skin, the American Negro.

Some Evangelistic "Musts" for the New Era

The Rev. Aaron N. Meckel

Braintree, Mass.

THE use of the word "must" may seem to be a bit authoritarian in a gathering of free Churchmen! And yet, I do not at all apologize for its use in the evangelistic context. One cannot read the prophets of the Old Testament without being aware that on their hearts lay a burden which it was their responsibility to deliver. Nor can one read the pages of the New Testament without becoming aware that yonder is set a door through which men must enter to be saved, a sacred context of life into which men must come for life-abundant. And who can read and live with Paul—that consummate evangelist!—without feeling his heart challenged and inspired by his, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel of Jesus Christ"? Evangelism in its greater eras has always had an element of the compulsory in it—has been a "must" proposition.

Personally, let me state my own conviction, that the opportunities for a vigorous, evangelistic church today are unprecedented. In my own rather limited ministry, I have never known the human heart to be more wistful or hungry in its out-reach for help beyond the self than it is today. It's true: "When the world is at its worst, the Church of Jesus Christ should be at her best." That, "man's extremity is veritably God's opportunity." Paul Hutchinson, after his trip through Europe, states that revival cannot possibly begin there. Europe is crushed under its burdens. The nations are looking to American Christianity for sustenance and spiritual inspiration in this moment. Men must have that living Word apart from which all efforts at physical reconstruction are futile, and without which they cannot live.

I call you to witness, then, that this hour is no time for complacency, for a status quo, "fair to middlin" Churchmanship! If we are satisfied, "curled up and content," because our church pews are comfortably filled, finances good, and things on the whole are going pretty well, then God have mercy upon us! Woe unto all such as think the "lines have fallen unto them in pleasant places," and who are at ease in Zion! They are indulging a hoax! The statement that the opportunities for a sane and vigorous evangelism are infinite at present needs to be supplemented by another: namely, that only a repentant, spiritually impassioned church and ministry can rise to the challenge of the times. This is an hour for the Christian enterprise to launch out on a great offensive! It is in many respects such a day as faced a Dwight Moody, a George Whitefield, and a John Wesley—men who discerned with wisdom the signs

of their times and then released a great flood of spiritual power for their redemption.

I

First of all, I believe that as Christian workers we must have a heightened awareness of the *content and meaning of the gospel* of life we are sent to proclaim! The trumpet must make a distinct sound if men are to gird themselves for battle. Mind you, I do not argue for a theological straight-jacket. The best and most earnest of men will have honest differences when it comes to the basic ultimates and ends which constitute the inner matrix of our Faith. What I am concerned with is *the impact* of a glorious gospel of life and light and power on a man's mind and heart, apart from which he cannot, and does not even want to, be a winner of souls for his Lord and Master. In the long run, evangelism—the bringing of the Good News of God's redeeming Love in Jesus Christ to men—is a matter of heart-power.

But having said as much, yet there are basic concepts and substantive verities at the heart of the Christian revelation which demand honest and fearless re-interpretation, if we are to be effective heralds. The contemporary scene swarms with false messiahs and gospels! They have already taken a heavy toll. You and I claim to be accredited ambassadors for Jesus Christ. The world of men demands, is entitled to know, the theological "platform" on which we stand, and to inspect our credentials. The times call for a message which is spiritually definitive and consistent, and which embodies the great central verities of our Christian Faith, and yet let it be added, which is stated in a vocabulary "understanded by the people." In an article entitled, "The Problem of Language," in THEOLOGY TODAY, Professor F. W. Dillingstone mentions a letter which was written him by a layman concerning a sermon. The words of that sermon, said the layman, were "like bubbles floating in the air or like the froth on a glass of beer—they didn't seem to connect up with ideas at all." And George Buttrick, leading Presbyterian pastor, has recently contended before a gathering of distinguished religious education leaders for a catechism which would present in summary form to the younger generation the facts and truths of our Christian Faith.

How, pray, can a man be an effective evangelist and not be reasonably clear in his own mind concerning the great central doctrines of sin, redemption, repentance, the Holy Spirit, Eternal Life, the Kingdom of God, etc.? We must distil life from them, and that without becoming technical. Says Lewis J. Sherrill, in his GUILT AND REDEMPTION: "Preaching the gospel in the early church meant the authoritative proclamation of a *short body of momentous facts:* Jesus Christ had *come,* had *suffered, died* and had *risen* from the dead." Yes, it's the joyous and confident proclamation of event; of a saving deed of God for man's salvation. Let, then, our pulpits sound out with confidence the fact that God in His mercy has in Jesus Christ given us a word that can set men on their feet. When it was suggested to C. H. Spurgeon that there was a quality of sameness about his sermons, he was frank to admit it. But what a living stream of witness flowed out from his inspired pulpit! W. D. Chamberlain in his book THE MEANING OF REPENTANCE argues that we have been too negative in our interpretation of repentance. It's a forward looking word, he says. And he reminds us that men are not only saved FROM but FOR something. Someone asked an old Negro minister, after hearing him pray earnestly, "What is UNCTION?" "Brudder," he replied, "I dunno whut it is, but I knows when it ain't!"

Here then is our first "Must": that I can meet the challenge of this new atomic era into which science has hurled us, only as I am persuaded and laid hold on, by a positive, life-giving message, grasped by a flexible mind, and winged towards men by a warm heart.

II

In the second place, *we must re-focus our aim!* According to John R. Mott, evangelism is "the process of bringing men into vital contact with Jesus Christ." With the gospel of life entrusted to us, we must penetrate the springs of human action. We must be impatient with mere surface results, with the kind of evange-

lism which is content to skim the outer layer of men's lives, rushes them in massive numbers into the church, omits the vital work of nurturing them into maturity, thus leaving them largely where we met them! Therein lies the one caution I would enter with regard to what is called Visitation Evangelism. Certainly, it is needed. But people need far more than to be *visited* if they are to become vital links in the Christian chain; *men must be changed!* A psychiatrist, when asked what is therapy, replied as follows: "The best way I know how to describe it is in religious terms. It is being born again." After referring to the "Augean stable of human personality," Lewis J. Sherrill continues, "the human organism seems capable of enduring anything in the universe except a clear, complete, fully conscious view of oneself as he actually is." And Kagawa adds, "He who calls evangelism antiquated is a novice as regards life. When the destiny of mankind as a whole is considered, we must acknowledge that Christ made no mistake in His passionate effort to save."

Indeed, we need to re-focus our aim! Just what are all these bustling efforts, within organized Christianity, for? What are we after? I believe that every sermon we preach and visit we make ought, if at all possible, provoke the Pentecostal query of old: "Sirs, what must we do to be saved?"

Haven't you been appalled at times at the lush inroads the cults have been making in the ranks of supposedly "good" and intelligent people? Just the other day I learned of a former faithful parishioner of mine, a physician in Boston, who in a desperate battle with the drink habit, assumed vows in a Roman Catholic monastery. Make no mistake about it; people are grasping at straws in days like these! There is a "sickness unto death," a fundamental wrongness and restlessness and wretchedness deep in the hearts of people. Secular nausea breeds its foul brood in the human heart. Modern man is like the poet's infant, "crying in the night and with no language save a cry." Our sermons and our pastoral counsel—when face to face with a specific need, we often preach our best sermons!—must articulate and interpret to this "crying infant" his often unconscious hunger for God. Brethren, *we must probe deep,* and then, with divine help, prescribe the blessed medicine of forgiveness at the heart of the gospel for the repentant and wistful. The *depth psychology,* sinking its inquisitive shafts into the coils of the human heart, has shocked many of us with its revelation of the sins of supposed "good people." Let us be grateful that it has! Rabbi Liebman, in his widely read book, PEACE OF MIND, takes "liberal religion" to task for so cavalierly overlooking the dynamic, instinctive drives of the emotions,—that powerhouse of the personality. It is *there,* in that rather weird realm so little understood by us, that Christian decision must be made, and the verdict sought. All else is surface procedure. Somehow we have got to get deep down underneath the conventional, pleasant religion of "nice people," many of them in our churches,—and seek, with the aid and guidance of the Holy Spirit, *to get lives renewed* in the image of Him Who created us. Only a sublimely radical gospel can bring about the revolution that is needed in human personality! Remember Chesterton's reason for making his pilgrimage to Rome: "I wanted to know the truth about myself," said he. Let's be frank to say, many do not! But once they know the Truth that makes men free, they are everlastingly grateful to those who were courageous enough to lead them to it.

III

Third, we must make a new inspection of our *methods* in evangelism, to see if they really work, and are adequate for the new day. "What can I do," asked a woman, "to make my husband see that it is disloyal for him to walk by his church Sunday mornings with never a thought of worship in his head?" What have YOU with which to reach that man? Here are homes by the hundreds with no mention of God or hint of prayer in them from day to day. How reach and revolutionize those homes? Here are many whose once sacred marriage relationship, assumed at a church altar, is falling to pieces for lack of a working relationship to a church. Most of all, there is that vast, pagan mass, beyond the reach of

any Christian influence. Brethren, we need to retrim our nets and re-assume our office as fishers of men!

When the People's Church of St. Paul, Minnesota, burned down a few years ago, a magnificent statue of the Christus was hurtled thru the charred ruins down to the street. Millions who had never before seen it beheld it for the first time. Perhaps we can take a leaf from the candidates in the recent gubernatorial election Everywhere they went,—to the wharfs, factories, city streets, country lanes, with their advocacy. Anywhere they could catch an eye or hold an ear! I, for one, believe that we must get out of the worn rut, and launch out in terms of new and untried strategies. Let every man find out his own forte,—the manner in which he can most effectively reach men for the Kingdom. Some are gifted with fervent utterance, others with special gifts in pastoral work. Still others have a plus of organizing ability. All are necessary and essential in the work of evangelism.

Surely it is incumbent upon us to go to the teeming centers of our cities and "plead with men." It is an interesting and searching experience, for instance, to stand on the steps of a place like St. Paul's Cathedral, on a warm, summer evening, and conduct an outdoor service. The trumpet is sounded. Old and memorable hymns are sung. When your turn comes, you must speak with passion and precision, or your congregation just walks off to a more interesting scene! The after-meeting with "enquirers" (a word we need to recoin!) is a memorable experience. Sometimes when my heart is warmed with the message for Sunday morning, I call a list of homes on a Saturday night. I call it "telephone evangelism," and it works! Nothing will, of course, ever take the place of a person-to-person evangelism, carried on week by week, by the faithful soul seeker and winner. Most of all, we must pray and preach and inspire an *evangelistic church* into being a *power-house of the Spirit*, which sheds abroad the ferment of its enthusiasm all through a community. As pastors and layfolk, we must again feel a deep *concern* for the unreached! Oh for an evangelism with grappling hooks! Spiritual awakening will come when pastors and laymen will again pray for it and ask God to use them mightily in the process. It needs to be pointed out to people that joining the church involves vicarious participation in a spiritual movement whose aim it is to reach mankind. It's a radical step to take. It's nothing tame! And not only the men and women of our churches, but the boys and girls in our youth groups and Sunday Schools will respond eagerly to a forthright Christian challenge. I keep repeating to my people the words of Moody, "Why not go into our religion with at least as much enthusiasm as we do into our athletics!" It was said of the early Church that there was "no small stir about the Way." I really believe that the day of imposing religious edifices and stereotype methods of worship is drawing to a close. You'll not reach the vast mass of the people with it! When Kagawa was asked what buildings he would like to see while in Boston, he replied, "I'm not interested in church architecture. Take me where they are *doing things to help people!*" To reach people,—*that* takes *fire* in the hearts of men and on the altars of a church. The old-fashioned prayer meeting, with opportunity for sharing and testimony, is being revived in many churches. And in some of our sophisticated Episcopal churches the rectors are holding Sunday evening "Gospel Sings!"

We repeat, then, as to methods: First, God must put a "concern" in our hearts for those who need us, and the Christ we serve, the most. Then, experiment endlessly! Use any legitimate method or strategy which will reach and win men for your Savior. And don't be afraid of being "a fool for Christ's sake" in the eyes of the world. There's a deep joy and a glory in it!

IV

And now a closing word: we need to see evangelism as a TOTAL PROCESS, penetrating the many stricken areas of our larger life. Nor is it an intermittent activity, drummed up now and then in a fever of excitement, although there will be seasons of intensive and united effort to reach a largely pagan society with the Gospel. It is the steady temper of a Church. It seems to me, too, that *both*

a *negative conservatism,* which stresses individual conversion to the exclusion of environment, and a naive liberalism which overlooks the need of the redemptive individual in the leavening of the pagan mass are off-center! Our Lord points the way and gives us the key. He claimed the world for the reign of His Father's Will, and yet preached the supreme evangelistic sermon of all time to a hungry-hearted man named Nicodemus. After the arrest of John the Baptist, Jesus hurls His insistent demand and challenge into the teeth of His contemporaries: "Repent ye"—He presses His message on the heart of the individual—"For the Kingdom of God is at hand,"—this Reign of God seeks to penetrate every nook and cranny of the world for God. Evangelism must be as total and all-demanding as the Gospel it seeks to address to the conscience and mind of man.

Meanwhile, as for my ministry, I am going in for *personal decisions and conversions* because I believe that right now the supreme need is for individuals in whose surrendered lives the Kingdom has come! When the Lord Jesus gave His Great Commission to evangelize the world, He did not hand it over to a committee on resolutions! He sent out, in His Name, a relatively small number of individuals who had caught His passion and were aflame with His Spirit. Brother minister, how many truly COMMITTED INDIVIDUALS have you in your Church? Men and women on whose loyalty and integrity you can really depend? In the last analysis, *that* is what counts! "Bible people," writes my friend, Elmer G. Homrighausen, "were aware of the 'HOLY MUST'!" And, he adds, "No playing around with the religious ideas will suffice." And Bishop Berggrav, who knows the smell of a concentration camp, speaks for the whole Church when he says, "Truth is again becoming holy for us, and when it becomes holy, it makes martyrs." We American laymen and pastors must have the audacity of the British Bishops, who in a late report on evangelism dared to call their Nation Godless and pagan, and in the Name of the Redeemer, to seek to bring it anew to God. Wanted, as the great end in all our evangelistic endeavors: the inspiration of the TOTAL MAN FOR THE TOTAL TASK.

When Dwight L. Moody quested for souls in England, he was heard by A. C. Benson, son of a British Archbishop. And the result? "I was pierced to the heart,—I went out into the night as if dizzied by a sudden blow."

May it not be that something like that must first happen to us? That it is only as we ourselves are "pierced to the heart" that we can relay to others the redeeming love of One Who was supremely "pierced to the heart" in order that mankind might come to a saving knowledge of that best of all News: that our God is a God who cares, and, because He cares, has power to save unto the uttermost!

What to Do and How to Do It

The Rev. John D. Kettelle

Barrington, Rhode Island

SOME years ago the colored supplements of some of the Sunday newspapers carried a comic section entitled "Billy the Boy Artist." Billy was usually accompanied by two professorial mentors who in attempting to advise him usually wound up in an argument with each other. Each appealed to the authority of a book which he always carried under his arm. The tall one, Professor O. Howe Wise, entitled his book "What To Do," while the short one, Professor I. B. Smart, had named his "How to Do It."

Looking back over many years of preachers' conferences, it seems that these are perennial questions also in the minds of Christian ministers. Only today, reading through the articles in the current MINISTER'S QUARTERLY, I was

struck with our preoccupation with the questions of aims and methods. Here we could learn how to evangelize, how to pray, how to live through Monday, how to give counsel, how to win young men to the Christian ministry, how to select sermon titles, how to preach sermons, and how to resign gracefully when our work is done.

My own life has been very largely a quest for that happy technique which, when intelligently applied in a particular situation, will produce a successful ministry. I have become convinced that there is a right and a wrong way to do many things, and that no one can have too much technical knowledge about the job that he is trying to do. But I have also become convinced that success in the work of the ministry has very little to do with a happy choice of particular methods and techniques.

It really does not matter much what we do, or how we do it, so long as we approach our task with the proper spiritual attitude. Rather surprisingly we find this point of view supported by the Gospel records. At only two points is Jesus reported to have given specific directions of a technical nature: "After this manner pray ye," and "Do this in remembrance of me." All the rest of his teaching is primarily concerned with attitudes toward God and toward our fellow men.

For the minister, the *sine qua non* of success is not technical excellence, but love of God and love of men. This, we need not be reminded, is the substance of the Great Commandments, and the main emphasis of all the teachings of the Master.

If a minister loves God, he will be content with the work God gives him to do, no matter how difficult or unremunerative that work may be. He will do his work in that manner which he deems most pleasing to God, and hence will bring to it the total resources of his strength and mind. There is no criterion by which the success of his work may be measured by the onlooker. Numbers do not tell the story, nor fame, nor financial reward. The only criterion is the satisfaction of hearing in his own heart the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

If a minister loves men, he will accept them as they are. However unlovable they may be, he will manage to find in them some grace or quality of character which will enable him to overlook their manifest shortcomings. He will not insist that they attain to his own high standards of morality, nor that they hold the same opinions in matters of religion. He will not try to fit them into an established pattern of "church" activities, but will endeavor to suit the program of the church to their specific needs. Praying and singing together are not the only ways in which mutual affection may be developed. Just as effective in their own way are such pursuits as roasting hot dogs, painting furniture, hooking rugs, playing chess, or studying differential calculus, when these things are done to the glory of God.

Above all, it should be remembered that in the work of the ministry it is not our work that is important, but the Spirit of God which works in and through us. As Jesus himself admitted, "The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst hear the sound thereof, but thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor wither it goeth." We cannot compel men to come to our churches to hear us preach, and if, indeed, they come only by reason of the excellence of our sermons, that is no real compliment to our ministry. But if we truly feel the love of God in our hearts, and manifest that love in our relationships in the community, the love will do its own redeeming work, and we shall be surprised ourselves at the number and variety of ways in which it will bear fruit.

A Service of Consecration and Installation of Church Officers

as used at The First Parish Church of Sheffield, Mass.

The Rev. Howard Ellsworth Mather

THE spirit of the service is quite informal, in keeping in the main with the practice of most of our free churches. Immediately after the Scripture lesson in the evening service the Church Clerk steps forward to the lectern or pulpit and calls the roll of Deacons, who come forward taking their places at the right of the Holy Table. When they are assembled, St. Paul's words concerning the office of Deacon from 1 Timothy 3 are addressed to them.

The roll of Trustees is then read, who coming forward to the left of the Table are greeted by the pastor with a brief reminder that their office is one of Stewardship, ending with 1 Cor. 4:2.

The roll of the officers of the Ladies Aid is likewise called, who are greeted with a brief appropriate greeting. The officers of the Sunday School, together with the teachers, are called forward to join the semicircle about the Altar; and any other church society which it is desired to include.

When all are assembled, the Pastor reads Romans 12: 3–15, and the following concluding service adapted from "God in the Daily Round" from a Service Book For Young People, copyright by Pilgrim Press, is followed.

Minister. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?

Officers. He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood, nor sworn deceitfully.

Then may the Minister make extemporaneous prayer or the following collect may be said:

Minister. Let us upon beginning our labors seek the help and favor of Almighty God.

Officers. Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorify thy Holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Minister. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, and that the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are; therefore so glorify God in all things which pertain to your body both as to be an example to others and that ye lose not your own soul.

Response, officers and people. First stanza, hymn "O Jesus, I have Promised."

Minister. I therefore beseech you that you walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called, with lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love as become brethren in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Response, officers and people. Second stanza, "O Jesus, I Have Promised."

Minister. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.

Response, officers and people. Third stanza of hymn, "O Jesus, I Have Promised."

Then may the minister call upon a Deacon or other of the officers assembled at the altar for extemporaneous prayer, followed by The Lord's Prayer and the following unison prayer:

O God, who hast commanded us to become perfect, as Thou, Our Father, art perfect; put into our hearts, we pray Thee, a continual desire to do Thy will. Teach us day by day what Thou wouldst have us do, and give us grace and power to fulfill the same. In the name of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord we ask it. Amen.

Minister. The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

(The officers return to their several places in the congregation.)

The Sermon of the Occasion follows.

Concerning Universalists

The Rev. William E. Gilroy

Former Editor Advance

THE day after I received the invitation to write this article I was in Tarpon Springs, in Florida, where in the Universalist Church of the Good Shepherd are housed the beautiful and inspiring religious paintings of the late George Innes, Jr. It is the second time I have visited that shrine, and it is worth any traveler's while to go miles out of his way if necessary, as I did, to spend an hour in that place where the soul and hand of a great artist have left a noble heritage of beauty and holiness.

My reference to the matter here is more than casual. Among some of the sternly Calvinistic there has been a tendency to think of Universalists as somewhat spiritually lax, and of Universalism as among what an Episcopalian fellow-traveler, in Colorado, once called "easy" religions. My fellow-traveler on that occasion was referring specifically to Methodists, and I was startled when I remembered that in the strict and exacting discipline and practice of my early Methodist home that appraisal was precisely reversed, and my parents were wont to regard their Episcopalian neighbors as lax and worldly. It all goes to show how seriously we may misunderstand and misinterpret what the essential meaning and emphasis of our neighbor's faith may be to him.

It was not by chance that in the emotional religious experience that stimulated his creative art George Innes joined a Universalist church, and bequeathed his paintings to the little church, physically hardly adequate for their setting, but symbolically adequate as typifying the nature and quality of the Artist's religious belief. Light and leadership, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil, are the underlying themes depicted in these masterful creations of technique and color. One stands not only in the presence of great paintings, but in communion with a soul whose faith and vision were sublime; and I can think of nothing that would more readily dispose of mistaken notions of Universalism, if they existed in the mind of any traveler, than a visit to that shrine.

There are other shrines of Universalism that are equally impressive in their spiritual quality; and the greatest of these is associated with the very beginning of the Universalist churches in this country. It is doubtful whether in all church history there is a more remarkable, or more romantic, story than that of the coming of John Murray, often called the "founder" of the Universalist body in America, from England to the New Jersey shore, in 1770, a Jonah-like traveler, fleeing from his responsibilities, seeking only rest and peace from his troubles and his spiritual vagaries, and finding there in the woods a church already awaiting him in as strange and unexpected a situation as one could well imagine.

I

The details of that story, amply verified, leave one only the alternative of accepting them as almost incredible coincidence, or regarding them as very exact

evidences of Providential guidance. In reaction from an intense, but varied and fitful, religious experience and activity, emotionally upset by the death of his wife and child, in rebellion against the stern and strict Calvinism in which he had been brought up, suffering from a persecution complex because of the attitude of his former Methodist and Whitefield associates, because of his developing Universalism, Murray had shipped as a supercargo, renouncing all thought of preaching, with the purpose only of losing himself and finding rest in the wilds of America.

Revolutionary sentiment was already developing, and in September of 1770 American merchants, in protest against what they considered unfair treatment by the mother country, signed a pact not to import, nor to allow others to import, goods from England into the colonies. As the "Hand-in-Hand," the ship on which Murray sailed, neared America a passing ship warned that this pact was in force at New York. The captain, assured that the pact was not yet in force in Philadelphia, changed his course for that city, but when the pilot came on board he learned that just the opposite was the case.

Other passengers disembarked, but Murray remained on the brig, which was to proceed the next day to New York. Losing its bearings in a dense fog the vessel ran over a sandbar into Cranberry Inlet on the Jersey coast near a place with the appropriate name of "Good Luck." The ship was prevented by anchors from being driven on shore, and a part of the cargo was removed to a sloop engaged for the purpose, and Murray was put in charge. Next morning, aided by a high tide and a favorable wind, the "Hand-in-Hand" put to sea, but before the sloop could follow the wind changed, leaving the sloop stranded within the sandbar.

Lacking provisions, Murray went ashore, and after walking some distance through the woods, he came upon a house, and a trim-looking meeting house, built of sawed lumber, bordering a bush road that was little more than a trail. Here, momentous meeting, he encountered history and destiny in the remarkable character, Thomas Potter.

With the satisfaction of all his material needs, Murray was amazed to hear Potter declaring, "I am glad you have returned. I have longed to see you. I have been expecting you for a long time!"

II

Here in the woods, with lumber from his sawmill, Potter had erected what a Quaker visitor in 1760 had described as a "large meetinghouse," free for all preachers to use "except Papists." When the building was finished, and the Baptists wanted it for their own, Potter told them that it should be theirs at once "if they could make it appear that God Almighty was a Baptist." To eager Quakers and Presbyterians he made a similar reply. It was there for itinerant preachers, with whose views Potter at times had little sympathy, but all the time in his soul was the conviction that some day his preacher would come, a man sharing his own liberal faith that "all mankind are equally dear to Almighty God." With the arrival of that becalmed ship over the sand bar he knew that his man had come. An amazing spectacle, that! A man so illiterate that it is said that he could neither read nor write, yet with a great soul, a mystic, as sagacious as he was devout, his mind filled with noble thoughts concerning God and man, cherishing an inward vision and hope, and building in accordance with his dream!

The reluctant Murray had no chance against such a sponsor, or against such evidences of divine leading. Once convinced, he threw himself into the new movement with all the zeal that had hitherto characterized his following of Wesley and Whitefield. Except that he lacked Wesley's genius and scholarship, he might fittingly be called the John Wesley of Universalism in America. He traveled up and down the coast, preaching wherever he could find anybody to listen. It was the age of proof texts, and his sermons were Scriptural, so much so that he left his hearers to form their own conclusions and implications, bringing upon himself the charge that he concealed the real nature of what his enemies regarded as his subversive doctrine.

His preaching was extemporaneous, and he left no writing of literary quality.

He was highly emotional, and the force of his appeal may, perhaps, be judged by an incident reported in his biography, "Hell's Ramparts Fell," by Skinner and Cole (p. 113). In Portsmouth, a Mr. Drown, a member of the Established Church, invited Murray to his home. The old-fashioned brick oven had been heated for baking. Murray looked into it, and inquired what they were going to do with it. "Bake bread," was the reply. "I wondered," said Murray solemnly, "if you were going to roast the children." His host bristled in horror. "How much worse," said Murray, "would it be for you to roast your little family, than for the Infinite Father to burn eternally unconverted millions of souls?" It is stated that Mr. Drown was a ready convert to the renunciation of the doctrine of endless punishment.

III

To think of Murray as the founder of Universalism would, of course, be contrary to fact. In the excellent account of Universalism in vol. 10 of "The American Church History Series" it is made clear that Universalist conceptions are almost as old as Christianity itself, and have been held widely by many who have retained their denominational connections in non-Universalist bodies. Nor can Murray with strict accuracy be regarded as the "founder" of the Universalist denomination in this country, a distinction commonly accorded him. At the time of Murray's coming and activities there was an upsurge of Universalist sentiment in various places, and under various leaders, so that the Universalist fellowship as an official body may be said to have a number of founders. Murray's distinction as a founder, and the foremost place accorded him, arise from three factors: the Potter church to which he came may be regarded as the first Universalist church in America; the church to which he ministered in Gloucester was the first officially organized as a Universalist church; and Murray's outstanding activity as the chief apostle of the movement gave him, as I have suggested, a Wesley-like place and influence.

Murray's much-traveled and restless life ended in some years of paralysis, and in some unhappiness as, a strong Trinitarian himself, he witnessed the Unitarian elements developing in the Universalist body, under the influence and leadership of Hosea Ballou. Almost from the beginning, and to the present day, both Trinitarians and Unitarians have been in the Universalist fellowship, but there has been little, if any, disposition to unite officially with the Unitarian denomination, and the emphasis has been upon the dominant, cohesive principle of Universalism.

IV

Ever since the Omaha Council, in 1927, our Congregational fellowship has been on record as favorable toward affiliation with the Universalist fellowship. That nothing came of the friendly approaches at that time was due to the action of the Unitarian headquarters in Boston, and my friendly attitude toward my Unitarian neighbors on Beacon Hill has never prevented my feeling that they played an unworthy, dog-in-the-manger policy in that situation. With over a century to seek union with the Universalists, in which so far as I know they had made no serious approach, official Unitarianism suddenly became very active when it appeared that there was some likelihood of affiliation between the Universalists and ourselves. The effect of their action was to create a diversion that upset any plans that were in formulation, and nullified any action taken at Omaha. Yet no drawing together of Unitarians and Universalists resulted, and after nineteen years the two left-wing bodies, so far as I can observe, are as far apart as they ever were.

For several years I sat with the late Bishop Fred Fisher, of the Methodist Church, on the committee seeking to establish a liberal Christian fellowship that would cross denominational lines. Despite some interesting meetings the movement came to nothing, and the rock on which it split was some undefinable, but very real, and apparently psychological, barrier between the professedly ultra-liberal groups, from whom the most might have been expected.

The fact is that in the whole range of denominations today the Universalists and the Congregational Christians are most

akin. The Universalist churches are completely Congregational in polity, and the temper and spirit of their fellowship, as I have observed it in close and rather extensive contacts, is much like our own. Similar freedom has produced a variety of opinions and convictions, much like that in our free fellowship, but the bond of unity is strong. *The Christian Leader,* the official organ of the Universalist body, is now edited and published at Congregational House, 14 Beacon St., Boston, having moved in from next door about the time that *Advance* moved to New York. Its present editor is Dr. Emerson Lalone, long associated with his predecessor, Dr. John van Schaick, Jr., whose twenty-odd years of editing almost coincided with my own years on *The Congregationalist* and *Advance.* The *Leader* through these years has had a large Congregational constituency, both in readers and contributors. For some years Dr. van Schaick has had dual fellowship, being a member of the Suffolk West (Congregational) Association. It was significant of his spirit when the paper changed its name some years ago from *The Universalist Leader* to *The Christian Leader.* No denomination could circumscribe a man like van Schaick, and though the change was resented by some, and Dr. van Schaick has been frequently under fire for his Christian eclecticism, I believe that he represents the predominant spirit and trend among the Universalists today.

V

I do not know what the disposition of the Universalist body toward affiliation, or union, with us may be today, but, if a practical movement to revive the project were made, a strong argument for it would be the fact that there are among our million or more Congregational Christians today probably more members who hold essentially Universalist views than there are members in the entire official Universalist denomination. I state this the more readily as I myself am not of the number. My wish psychology inclines me strongly toward Universalism. With all my heart I long to believe, with Tennyson, that:

". . . somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet
That not one life shall be destroyed
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain."

That is a noble faith, easiest, perhaps, for those with a strongly Calvinistic background; for it is the logic of Calvinism in its doctrine of divine sovereignty, if you postulate a God of love, and not the sort of God that led the late "J.B.", famous journalist of "The Christian World," once to say that it sometimes looked as if the church through the ages had been running two devils, the one only a little better than the other.

Universalism, I say, is a noble faith; but my own backgrounds are not Calvinistic. I am impressed with the fact that there is a real loss in the universe through sin and the fiendishness of man, no matter what may happen in the ultimate goal, which I do believe will be the triumph of good. Perhaps these views, or moods, are not irreconcilable. It was an essential Universalist, Charles Kingsley, who put into the lips of the character, Sandy Mackaye, in "Alton Locke," as he surveyed the havoc of his social environment, the memorable words: "Harlots frae the breast, drunkards frae the womb! Methinks John Calvin had an inkling o' the truth, wi' his deevil's reprobation doctrine."

A Roman Catholic friend some time ago expressed to me the view that this present world is hell. The sun is shining, the trees are budding, a golden sheen is upon the willows, and the earth is clothed with what led Goethe to call Nature the living garment of God. I cannot believe that this world is hell; but there is a hell in it that has terrible reality.

But, whatever my own inhibitions, I have welcomed, and I welcome, the fullest comity and fellowship with those

who hold to all that belief toward which my wish psychology inclines me; and if closer relations should ever come to pass between our two "denominations" (we are actually both only free fellowships of independent churches), I could only wish that the resulting fellowship would be as profitable and delightful as mine has been with my Universalist neighbors on Beacon Hill for over twenty years.

The Gospel for the Open Country

THE TASK—THE MAN—THE MESSAGE

The Rev. W. T. Boyd

Appleton, Wisconsin

I WAS BORN in the city. The first few years of my life were spent in a city parsonage. When I was about twelve years of age my father began work as a state missionary and the family moved out to grandfather's farm, a big rocky old Maine farm. Here my boyhood and young manhood were spent. For the past twenty-five years I have tried to do the work of a Christian minister, and twenty of those years have been in mission pastorates in the open country. That is my apology for my subject today.

In the last twenty-five years I have learned much and have more still to learn.

No man can make a success of the country ministry who does not love the country, love its solitudes, its hardships and its loneliness. And he must feel that he has a real man-sized job, a worthwhile task. I resent the idea so often expressed: "the little places." "Little men" a whole lot of us are, but there are no little places in God's great field of service. When we begin to talk to a man about the little place he is in, he begins to feel little. He develops a "little" complex or else he begins to feel cramped and longs and looks for a place where he can show the world how big he really is. We need to love our place and feel that it is as big as we can possibly grow and then there will be space that we can never fill. We are a part of the biggest institution there is and backed by the Supreme Power. Every man, woman and child is a prospect for what we have to offer and they will be better and happier and get more satisfaction out of life when they accept what we have for them. We are there for a purpose and should feel that we are there to stay until He that has called us tells us to go elsewhere. I visited a brother minister at one time at his invitation. He gave me a makeshift bed, with an apology, he had been there nearly a year and his goods were not all unpacked. "You know," he said, "I am only just filling in here waiting for something better." He moved in a short time after that, and then moved again and again. I have lost sight of him since, but I am sure he is just filling in waiting for something bigger. He is one of the few men I have met who could sing from his heart "I'm a pilgrim and a stranger," and when in course of time he reaches the Celestial City he won't unpack; he'll just fill in waiting for something bigger.

I

The country churches as a general rule have not had the best-trained, best-equipped men. To be brutally frank, they have had the second-rate ministers. There are notable exceptions to my statement. One such comes to my mind, Dr. Robie of Greenland, New Hampshire, a Harvard and Amherst man. Greenland is an open country parish. He went there from the Seminary and died there. When he had been fifty-five years in that one pulpit he delivered the address before a union ministers' conference. Over fifty ministers of various denominations sat up and took notice. A modern, up-to-date address by a fine scholar. Nearly sixty years he occupied that same pulpit and builded himself into the very life of that community, baptizing, marrying and bury-

ing three generations. There are other exceptions, but our country churches are for the most part served by amateurs, or by men who—well, who just don't get a call to some bigger place. When we do get hold of a really promising young man the city calls him and then a bigger city.

There is no occupation that I am acquainted with that offers such temptations for a man to get lazy, or dishonest, as the country pastorate. I don't mean that I think the men want to be either lazy or dishonest, but it is so easy to get that way. For example, what incentive is there to sweat your brains to build up a fine sermon when you know it will perhaps be delivered to an artistic lumber pile decorated with a few human faces, some of them blank, as the overtired workers have fallen asleep? How insidious is the temptation to do something secular on the side, to add a few dollars to the slim purse of the underpaid minister. Do you know, I've heard so much in the past forty years about the underpaid minister that at times I wonder if there is not some truth in it, and then I just check up on myself to see if I am really worth what I receive. And if I am not giving value in honest service; giving of my best to the task that is mine, I am not—no matter how little I receive.

II

The Congregational minister in the country parish is his own boss. He says how many hours he shall work, and what he shall do, and it is so easy to just slack up a little. To guard against these temptations a man should have a plan of work laid out, should know what he is to do and when. Like a railroad timetable, it must be subject to change without notice, but when the breaks come, and come they will and the best laid plans will have to be altered to meet the emergency calls, he should know when and where to begin and go on. His people will soon know where he is likely to be on such a day, when he plans to be home and when they can find him when they want him. If he has more than one church to serve, each church should have its own regular time and they will expect him to be there at that time. For example, I have one small group that I give one Sunday afternoon every two weeks. We meet at the church at two-thirty and have a period of worship and a sermon and then one of the farm women will say, "You are to go with me for dinner today." I don't know where I will go next time I am there but someone will be ready for me and I will find several of the families there also. Sometimes a dozen extra people will be there for that dinner, the women working together to prepare the dinner and the men visiting, and I get to know their work, worries, plans and prospects. They know that afternoon is theirs and it is the only time I can give to that parish, save once a month I plan to be at the Ladies' Aid dinner when the whole parish is there. I always pay for that monthly dinner, not because I have to, but because I want them to know I am interested to help a little. I consider those Sunday dinners are of more value than my sermons to the people and to myself. It brings us so much closer together and we understand our common task better.

In this plan of the minister for his work there should be a definite time for his study. To read the best books he can get and a good trade paper and our own denominational literature. We think we can't afford it. I find I can't afford to be without it. There is no valid excuse why we should not do this. A few cents' postage will bring us the books we cannot buy from the libraries or from our own state office. We need this, for you cannot get more out of a keg than you put into it and the same is true of our think tanks.

So much for the task and the man.

III

Our gospel should be the good news that will fit into the lives of our people. Too long we have tried to fit people into our message, to our creeds and doctrines and forms. They just won't fit but the gospel will fit perfectly into their lives. That is why we need to know our people, their language and customs, their life problems. Across the Kennebec River from my last Maine pastorate was a country district made up of three small towns. It had four small church buildings of three denominations. I visited them occasionally for a Grange meeting

or some business and I found out something about the conditions and then I got to pleading with the state office for a man for them. I just kept at the office (Supt. Hacke knows what that means) until finally they found a man. They engaged him for a six months' trial and he arrived on the field one Saturday evening. The next morning he went to one of the churches and found a few people there. In the afternoon he walked three miles to another church and found another dozen people waiting for him. On Monday he took the stage and appeared at the state office and said, "I can't do anything here.'" Of course he couldn't. He didn't know the people, didn't even know their language. Our message to reach the people must be in terms of their life. Our pulpit message and our life message are epistles, known and read of all men. Here is what I mean: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills." That's just Bible to the farmers of North Dakota who haven't seen a hill since coming out here high enough to require them to lift up their eyes. But this, "lift up your eyes to the fields, white already to the harvest," is dear to us on the plains. It doesn't mean a thing, however, to the Maine coast fishermen who never saw a wheat field in their lives. If I wanted to get the meaning of this passage to them I'd say, "Get out your nets, the fish have struck."

IV

I suppose I must have said the first psalm hundreds of times. I learned it in Sunday School, and we said it in day school and I have known the words ever since I can remember, but I never got it really until I came out here. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." That is where we find trees here. Back in my native state the trees grow anywhere. They crowd the farmer out of his fields if he doesn't watch out. A big red-faced, hard-handed fisherman came to church one Sunday a few years ago. He had never been in church before, but someone had told him if he would come to church, the minister would help him. He was worried over his own wickedness. He was what our fathers called "under conviction." He saw hell in all its lurid fury open before him. He was scared, just plain frightened. I don't believe he got a word of the hymns, prayers, scripture or sermon of that service. When I shook hands with him, he began and poured out his story and his questions. When he paused and I had a chance, I just said quietly, "God's got you in the pickle, and He won't let you spoil." He was a fisherman and to let a fish spoil was unpardonable. It was his own language and a new idea came to him right there. In a few weeks I baptized him and his family, and a year later that big fisherman knelt at the altar of that little church and we set him apart as a deacon of the church. And the change in his home bore testimony to the change in his life.

That is an idea of what I mean in fitting the gospel to the life. The gospel of kindness, of neighborliness, of loving sympathy, the Gospel of Christ, the common Christ among the common things of life.

CANDLE OF THE ALTAR

Candle of the altar dim,
Shine in my soul and see my sin.
Make it bright and radiant too;
Let my light so shine before me.

Candle of the altar bright,
Fall upon my mind and give me sight.
Make me see my fellowman;
Let me do thy good works.

Candle of the chapel small,
Enlighten my heart within the wall.
Make it true and pure and clean,
Glorifying the Father in heaven.

CHARLES F. HOOD

First Congregational Church, Hamilton, Massachusetts

Prayer

INSTALLATION SERVICE OF DR. HOWARD STONE ANDERSON

June 20, 1947

Almighty Father—
whose wisdom is our peace,
whose service is our joy—
in this hour fraught with destiny
we find our hearts strangely stirred
by thy splendor in Christ Jesus.
We remember thy grace and truth incarnate
as he went about doing good,
healing the sick,
teaching the ignorant,
challenging the complacent,
redeeming the penitent.

And we cannot forget
the great succession of those
who have ministered in his name in every age—
men and women
touching and touched by things unseen,
teaching and taught by light ineffable:
for that this mighty host
have failed not in their leaven of love,
we praise thee,
and him whom they saw
and whom they served.

In this spacious sanctuary
we add our particular praise
for the godly men in this church
and in this city
who have preached thy Gospel
in moving words
and living letters;
and especially for this latest
in splendid accession
whom this church has called to its ministry
prompted by thy Spirit.

As we rejoice in that prompting
and concur in that choice,
we beseech thee
to transfigure and confirm
thy high commission
to this pastor and this people.

In this church so vigorous
in ardor and aspiration,
lead thy servant still further
in the service of truth
and the long quests of compassion.
Make his love yet more profound,
more Christlike.

By thine abiding compulsions
enlarge his joy as he gives
his substance to the poor,
his strength to the weak,
his sympathy to the suffering
and his heart to thee.

Instal this pastor with growing sympathy
in the hearts of his people.
As he speaks to them
in quiet counsel,
in ringing words,
in stinging words,—
words varied and vital with thy gospel—
do thou brood upon
the chaos in the lives of this people,
the confusions in their hearts,
bringing power, calm and order.
And forbid that they should tempt thy servant
to leave off doing good
in order to do well.
Company with them in the years of their pilgrimage.
Grant that together,
under the power of thy Spirit,
pastor and people here may weave
a perfect, seamless vesture
of faith and hope and charity.
And as they weave,
lead thou the needy hither
to break the bread of life
and drink the wine of love.

And let thy peace, O God,
which passeth all understanding,
keep our hearts and minds
in the knowledge of thyself
and in the love of thy Son.
In the name of the Great Head of the Church
we pray,
our Master, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

DAVID NELSON BEACH

"Please Forward"

The Editor

THE envelope bearing the superscription of a Congregational-Christian agency was properly nd pessimistically addressed, for in the ower left-hand corner in bold black letrs was "Please Forward," as if no adressee were expected to be at home and, nerefore, must be followed up lest he scape (which is probably what he really anted to do!). The assumption that the inisters on the mailing lists of 287 ourth Avenue are not likely to be at ome in July is rather generous. Most inisters are neither so carefree nor footose, and they are more likely to be away n August than July. At any rate, it is a ise precaution and a haunting phrase.

So many things in the enterprises of fe need to be forwarded, as though verything were always changing its adress. The Greeks had a word for it, the flux" of things—a continuous passing-by nd moving on. Poets and novelists loved nd used the analogy—"Time, like an everolling stream, ——." Scientists, though ersuaded that all energy is conserved omewhere and somehow, are equally sure nat energy is capable of endless mutaons. They are always furnishing a new ddress for an old element or chemical ombination. They forwarded coal tar to niline dyes or perfumes or medicines. hey have posted forwarding addresses n cotton and peanuts, soy beans and what nce was waste. They are not now just ire of the final address of atomic fison. They have a chilling fear that they ay thus consign us and our civilization o an unknown address. It is risky busiess unraveling even the fringes of God's niverse.

* * *

Those of us whose memories date from happier world remember the once bright onfidence that our forwarding addresses were, so to speak, guaranteed by the sovereign nature and direction of a divine order:

"One God; one law; one element;
And one far-off divine event,
Toward which the whole creation
moves——"

No one seems to quote that any more, and a great sustaining faith has gone therewith into eclipse. Some of us still believe it, but we have been taught that it is not automatic, which we should have known. As a matter of fact, few of the philosophers and preachers who quoted Tennyson did believe that the process was automatic. They knew, as we know, that we ourselves share the responsibility of forwarding the unfinished, and we do not seem sure enough of how or where. We have far too much unforwarded matter in our moral and spiritual dead-letter offices. Those whose business it should be to set all our orders moving in the right direction are precious little help, being confused themselves and slow to use the direction cards they have. The wise and good, across uncounted years, have furnished general forwarding directions, and if we should use them, we should not be so helpless as we seem.

There is an air-mail map of these United States in the store-box of the country post office from which this will presently be mailed. It is a fascinating diagram, this net of airways above our earthways to link us to fabulous cities and distant coasts and give wings to a piece of writing which has no wings of its own. The map seems to say mostly that a letter will be flown from Boston only so far before another plane will take over, but the receiving office will start it in the right direction and trust aerial connections finally to set it down at its destination. In a good deal of our forward-

ing we can do no more than follow the right direction. It is all very much as though we, like a plane, could deliver a consignment only to an indicated station and trust that it will be carried on from there—and always in the right direction.

The moral and social maps are much like that. "Please Forward," they say, embattled issues and causes to the nearest Goodwill Station. "Please Forward" the interests which are our common concern and about which we are so deeply divided to the nearest Co-operation Station, and so on and on. Labor and management might do that; the United Nations might do it; the big 3's and big 4's, whose bigness seem somewhat mythical, might do that. They might not make a final delivery —that is beyond our present vision—but they could get us one stage nearer,

"One God; one law; one element;
And one far-off divine event,
Toward which the whole creation
moves——"

unless it moves toward chaos.

* * *

This is being written on a July morning when Mother Nature is so busy along our northern isothermal lines in her genius of forwarding that gardens grow overnight, rose petals drip down the soft winds, meadow grasses wait to be mowed, and there seems no room on any tree for another leaf. The marvel of it all grows old without ceasing; this forwarding of grass and tree roots by earth and water chemistry under sun stimulus into bread and beauty. What else is a farmer or a gardener but a forwarding agent, or any one else for that matter who takes a right part in any enterprise?

That, Emerson said, is also the province of the scholar. He is writing about writing books, "The scholar of the first age received into him the world around, brooded thereon, gave it the new arrangement of his own mind, and uttered it again. It came into him life; it went out from him truth. It came to him short-lived action; it went out from him a mortal thought. It came to him business; it went out from him poetry. It now endures—it now flies—it now inspires." Oliver Wendell Holmes said much the same thing, in another way, about poets. They receive their merchandise on one level, and by their genius lift it up and discharge it from another level. As Holmes himself took the shell of a Chambered Nautilus and made of it, "Build thee more stately mansions, oh my soul—"; or Wordsworth made a rapture of daffodils; or Keats learned from a Grecian urn that "Beauty is truth; truth, beauty. That is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

* * *

Since this is the MINISTER'S QUARTERLY even the most discursive so-called editorial should get in sight of the study, or the pulpit, before it stops. Not difficult—for the preacher shares with Emerson's scholar and Holmes' poet this gift of lifting what he receives to the highest levels of life and truth and inspiration. Every text has written across it in invisible ink, "Please Forward." The very composition of the sermon is always a forwarding process. Its development heightens and unfolds the potential content of the text or topic and delivers it to the congregation, not merchandise but a message, and he cannot explain even to himself upon what stores he drew to make it what it became.

Our masters in the art of preaching teach us how marvelously this can be done: Horace Bushnell, with "Every man's life a plan of God"; Newman, with "An Adventure of Faith"; Martineau, with his "Tides of the Spirit"; Chalmers, with his "Expulsive power of a new affection." These and their like have left time-worn texts to timeless levels. They are the forwarding agents of the Gospel.

* * *

So considered, it is all more or less analogy, of course—this erection in the

lower left-hand corner of an envelope "Please Forward"—but it does open up, as good analogies always do, and the esteemed readers of the QUARTERLY can forward its suggestions as they please. Creeds need to be forwarded to get them where people are, and the Sermon on the Mount forwarded to its divine control over power politics and militant industrialism and a world order which is breaking up for want of moral and spiritual direction. It does seem as if the mandates and messages without which the future seems perilous have, to repeat, gotten into a kind of dead-letter office, for which the Christian church has its own share of responsibility, and on the other hand, the Christian church has the ultimate forwarding address, or else there is no ultimate forwarding address.

* * *

Since printing is slow, and time is swift, this issue will not reach its readers, very likely, before the end of August, and there will be little need of putting "Please Forward" on the wrappers; but it might, for all that, be a good injunction for preachers to begin their working church-year with, whether they open their Bibles or survey their parishes. In the highest dimensions of life and truth and duty, they are the elected forwarding messengers.

GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

YE TOWNS AND CITIES

The Savior said, Come unto me
And I will give you rest,—
Then by the Galilean sea
Men gathered toward the west;
They trecked from stupid Chorazin
Faced by the fate of Tyre,
Capernaum, too, in Sodom-sin
Had drawn his scorching fire.
Men doomed to half-requited toil,
To labor's laden road,
Men ladened with oppressors' spoil
That eased those cities' load;
There, too, sneaked Pharisee and Scribe
To check the Savior's mind,
Beelzebub's, they claimed his tribe
Because he'd healed the blind.

Beside the Syrian sea that day
Cynics began to gloat:
"We wonder what he'll have to say
There templed in a boat!"
He spoke of sower, seed and Sun,
Of earth, of rock and thorn,
And ere his parables were done
The spies displayed their horn:
A milling throng of Israelites
Foregathered by that sea,
A motley crowd of urbanites
And no collection-fee!
No spired temple for that crowd,
With altar for their gaze,
No carillon of glory loud
With choir to chant his praise.

We now have Gothic spire designed,
The altar, choir and song,
Soft pews are free and unassigned,
Jesus! where is the throng?

THE REV. THOMAS BENJAMIN POWELL
Trumbull, Connecticut

And Now Dr. Fagley

IN the last MINISTER'S QUARTERLY there were several articles which had to do with recruiting men for the ministry and our shortage of ministerial recruits. May I be permitted to say that I am one of those who believe there "are lies, d— lies and statistics." I claim we have no shortage of men for the ministry. Wherever we have a church which pays a *very modest* salary we have a horde of men after it. When I came to the little town of Harwich a year and a half ago on half a carpenter's wage there were half a dozen men who would have been most happy to be called to its pastorate. Now that we have completely renovated the building, doubled and more the congregation, I have no doubt 25 men would be available. No, we have all the men of a certain type we need for any church which will pay a subsistence wage. When I left Leominster the chairman of the Pulpit Committee said he thot every minister in Massachusetts was after the place. It paid $4,200 a year and no house, not an exorbitant salary in these times of 75¢ hamburg.

Men do come to us from other denominations. I came from the Baptists and am grateful for it. Many of the good ministers I know came from other denominations. Dean Dabney of Andover Newton, while a guest at my home, told how he came from the Disciples. I received 28 members Easter Sunday. Two had been Roman Catholics; they came from half a dozen denominations. It is a tremendous gain for catholicity to have as our ministry men who are from a dozen denominations yet enjoying delightful fellowship as Congregationalists.

No, Dr. Fagley, I question very much the urging of men to go into our ministry unless they are of superior quality. In my former pastorate two men decided for the ministry, both very poor students. The principal of the High School was very sarcastic in asking me if this was the type of man the churches recruited. He was a deacon and trustee in the church at that, but felt there was something wrong when men who could scarcely graduate from High School were welcome in our seminaries. I could write on indefinitely, but will bore you no longer. But we have more than we need of dragging men in at one end of the hopper and throwing them out at the other.

Cordially,

(signed) GEORGE L. THURLOW.

The New Associates in Reading

The Rev. Donald Gaylord

Martinez, California

THE NEW western group of associates in reading has been working on its assigned task for seven months and, even yet, has not worked out a formula nor procedure completely to its own satisfaction.

As we understood our charter, it was expected of us that we do two things: first, that we assist the ministry of our fellowship through the medium of reading as the already well established eastern group has been doing for a number of years; but second, (it was understood) that we strive to find a different method for doing this. This desire for a different method did not arise from any dissatisfaction with the work of the older group. It is the natural expectation in forming a new group that its principal justification shall lie in its presenting a different approach, lest it merely duplicate the services already offered.

We are confronted with the selfsame facts which have been presented in this

Quarterly regarding our ministry and ne rather alarming falling by the way- ide of many of the ministers of the al- eady far too inadequate number who nter this work from year to year. It is bvious that something is wrong when so any men who must have felt the call to reach become either discouraged or dis- llusioned or lose the original incentive. Whatever else may be wrong, our group addressing itself to searching for a way prevent or at least greatly lessen the ellectual stagnation that would seem to a part of this failure. We are to strive keep alive and brightly burning the ental curiosity and drive which should ep the minister's mind fresh and fertile.

Through many discussions of possible ys of accomplishing this task, in most which the suggestions as and when ade seemed far more novel and attrac- ve than after they were written down d digested, we have arrived at the fol- wing tentative suggestions:

First, we propose that groups of read- s be formed either on a geographical asis or on the basis of a correspondence roup, who will read books, probably those ecommended by us, write a brief review f each book after it is read and exchange ne books with the reviews. The two riginal parts of this suggestion are: first, hat correspondence groups in reading be t up among those who are geographi- lly isolated. (It is felt that their need ong the line outlined above may be con- derably greater than among those who re close to their fellows.) Second, we ggested the writing of reviews as a imulus to a completion and thorough di- estion of each book. It is our hope that erhaps some of the best of these brief eviews may be published.

Second, we are also contemplating work- g with recent Seminary graduates, par- cularly along the line of guidance in read- g what applies to the special problems f intellectual maturing. It may be that members of our group might offer themselves, or other men whom we feel are equally well or better suited to serve as sponsors for these graduates.

Third, and this is our newest plan and one that is still in the formative stage, it is our thought that we might set up some groups who would be willing to pursue a course of reading that would center in the use of two volumes principally: first, the one volume condensation of Arnold Toynbee's "A Study of History" and second, "Human Destiny" by Le Conte du Nouy. The first of these, probably one of the outstanding works of our generation, is by one of our world's leading historians and presents a philosophy of history which is based on an avowedly spiritual premise. The second of these is by one of our leading scientists and presents a similarly spiritual approach to philosophy from the point of view of a scientist.

We now have, in addition to our own group, two other experimental groups already set up following the first of the procedures outlined. To any group who would like to organize to do this, we are recommending for the present the use of the five volumes of the Inter-Seminary Series. Some of these are reviewed in other pages of this journal.

We are still feeling our way and would welcome suggestions or inquiries from any interested persons. These should be addressed to Rev. Donald F. Gaylord, Chairman, Court and Susana Streets, Martinez, California, or to Rev. Elmo D. Wolfe, Secretary, P.O. Box 187, Benicia, California. Other members of the group are: Prof. George Williams, late of the Starr King School of the Ministry, Berkeley, California; Rev. Stephen Peabody of San Jose, California; Rev. Robert Inglis of Oakland Plymouth Church; and Rev. William W. Meyer, Education Director of the Northern California Congregational Conference.

Facts

The Rev. Frederick L. Fagley
Director, Department of the Ministry
Ministerial Supply

THE following facts are summarized from a careful study of the records of 264 Seminary students registered as of May 8, 1947, in Seminaries as preparing for Christian Life service in the Congregational Christian Churches. These facts are worthy of careful study by both our ministers and our lay members.

1. What is the prospect for new ministers from our Seminaries in the years immediately ahead?

At present there are enrolled 264 persons in the eleven Seminaries that train the major number of students for our ministry. Of this number 23 are taking refresher courses or postgraduate work, and 241 are in regular courses. The seminaries and their enrollment follow:

Andover-Newton	26
Bangor	38
Chicago	33
Duke	5
Hartford	24
Harvard	15
Oberlin	18
Pacific	9
Union	33
Yale	27
Yankton	36
Total	264

This number, 264 for overall, is 94 above the enrollment at this time last year.

Quite a number of the men in seminary are former G.I.'s and as I have met and talked with these men I have been impressed continually by their devotion, their sincerity and above all by their maturity. I am greatly encouraged by the type of student we now have in seminary. Many of them are from the top one-fourth of their college class. They know life; they have seen what human nature is like under many and varied conditions, and they have learned something of the heroism that is natural to the human soul and also the source of human weaknesses. In talking with them I feel as if I were talking to adults with long-range experience. I feel confident that within the next few years we shall find the ministry of our churches greatly strengthened by the inflow of these young men and young women who look life squarely in the face and who out of their own experience have learned that religion is a necessary part of the equipment of a man or woman for true living. Religion is not an elective but a requirement.

One interesting fact is that so many of these young people ask about employment where real sacrifice and great need exist. They are not so much interested in salaries and size of churches as they are in whether or not there are openings in our churches where they can use everything they have of insight and experience to help men and women to understand the issues of life.

2. Whence come these students?

You will be interested to know that of the 241 students in regular courses, 152 have come out of our Congregational Christian Churches. This is a much larger per cent from our own churches than have been reported in other years. In another section I will have something to say about the influences that led to the decision. The list of origins of these various students is as follows:

Congregational Christian	152
Methodist	21

Baptist	13
Community or Fed. Churches	11
Presbyterian	8
Armenian Evangelical	4
Evangelical & Reformed	3
Lutheran	3
Roman Catholic	2
Evangelical	2
Reformed	2
Unitarian	2
Amish Menonnite	1
Brethren	1
Episcopal	1
Church of God	1
Greek Evangelical	1
Moravian	1
Universalist	1
United, Canada	1
No reply	10
Total	241

Age when uniting with the Church.

Not all of the students have given us formation on this topic but we have plies from a sufficient number to gener- ze not too dogmatically but with enough formation to see the picture. Of those porting, 63 per cent united with the urch in the years below high school; per cent during high-school years; 8 r cent during college years; and 3 per nt after college. This would indicate at by far the larger number of students re raised under Christian influence and the church environment. It emphasizes e necessity of continuing our education young children and also points to the th that these decisions made in early uth are lasting. For example, of the ole number reporting, 60 or 25 per nt, united with the church at the age twelve.

We often hear it said that these early cisions are not to be taken as final, but believe that this indicates that the deci- ns of quite young children have ma- ed into life dedication. Seven of these dents joined the church at the age of , and two as early as the age of five, while only six united with the church after the age of twenty-three.

4. Age when deciding for the Ministry.

Here we have some very interesting figures. Twenty-three, or 10 per cent, of these young men and young women decided for Christian life service before high school. Eighty-two, or 40 per cent, decided in high school, which indicates that one-half of the total number of students now in seminary dedicated themselves to Christian life service before entering college. While in college 27 per cent made the decision, and 18 per cent in the four years following college, while 11 or 5 per cent made the decision in mature life at the age of twenty-seven or older. It is interesting to note that ten of the total group made the decision at the age of twenty-five. In rechecking the list it is evident that most of these ten young people are G.I.'s and made the decision to devote themselves to Christian life service while in service or as the outgrowth of their military service.

The fact that 40 per cent made the decision in high school while 10 per cent had decided earlier, would emphasize the importance of beginning our recruiting service for Christian life dedication much earlier than has been the custom.

It should be noted that in this analysis we have no record of those who made the decision for Christian life service in early youth or in high school or college and later changed their life objective. It would be exceedingly interesting to know at what age and the reasons for such a reversal of life objective, but we do not have this information nor do we know what might have been done to help those who turned to other work continue with their early decision.

5. What influence helped the student to decide for Christian life service?

In reply to this question the answers were:

Pastor's influence	87
Home and church influence	35

College Professor	2
Personal Conviction	71
War Service	9
Young Peoples Conference	8
No reply	29

It is a significant fact that 87 of these young men have told us that they are in seminary preparing for the Christian ministry largely because their pastor took a personal interest in them. The returns of similar study last year on this particular question were practically on the same percentage basis.

6. For what specific service are these students preparing?

To this question the replies are—for parish ministry 149, including 27 who are preparing specifically for rural work; 23 for foreign mission service; teaching or other educational work and young people's work 37; work in industrial area 7; ministry of music 5.

The fact that almost two-thirds of this number are preparing for the parish ministry is most encouraging and the further evidence of the rising interest in the rural ministry gives us all a peculiar satisfaction.

Personal Statement—A Minister Trying to Understand His Ministry

The Rev. Richard B. Carleton
Pittsfield, N. H.

AS a man looks on the face of his friend and sees only his soul so we look on the universe and see God. Only the expert, trained observer is able ordinarily to describe a man's outward appearance although he may know him inwardly through long association. The same is true when we look on the universe: we naturally see the truth of God. For centuries men have reported what they have seen in other people, what they have seen in the colors of the sunset, what they have seen in tree and cloud and fresh-turned earth. Down through the hundreds of years have come the fascinating myths of the Greeks, the Teutons, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Hebrews, and even the American pioneers; through the years have come gifts of poetry and prophecy and philosophy which still delight and tantalize the hungry mind; as though from old we look on men's minds when we see what they created in brick and granite and marble, in castle and temple and cathedral.

The truth of life is easy to see if one will think and imagine with a mind open to past, present, and future—open to physical, mental, and spiritual. Only in the last two or three hundred years have the scientists tried to train men to forget that their emotions and thoughts are parts of the truth of life and have told them to look only on the material present! The scientists have done such wonderful deeds that present-day advanced science disproves the old contention that truth is material. Men cannot help acknowledge the presence of a Power beyond themselves whenever they look around on life with an open mind, reporting what they see and what they feel inside. This is the truth of life for which men are made: to keep the open body and the open mind, struggling to express how they themselves feel, in new words and expressions fitting to their individual souls. I write these words about my religion, hoping, like Francis Bacon, to essay my own thoughts and observations on all phases of life.

Let us think of the actual content of our religious beliefs. Let us use no illustrations except those from our own experience with every part of the world. Let us speak the language of ourselves, fitting word to meaning. What does God mean to us? Let us think quietly, wherever we are, about God. What does Jesus Christ mean to us? Let us read the gospel-story—and that alone—with no "key" which will explain seeming contradictions except the one we ourselves discover. Why do we continue to talk about the Holy Spirit if we cannot adequately put it into words? There must be a reason. Do we believe in a spiritual, universal church? If so, let us as church-members (and the minister is no more than that!) find ways to be Christian to our fellow-church-members, and ways to make other people "turn again" to God. The difference which our religion makes in our lives is here within ourselves, and we should acknowledge it and try to express it, in word and work and song and dance. Only in believing and expressing some one creed do we know the truth of any creed.

We begin with this statement: men find their ideas of God expressed in their own lives,—not in the Bible but in understanding and using the Bible; not in the Church but in believing in and working for the Church: that is, when they have the opportunity to study what pours out of themselves when they talk and when they work and when they play and when they love. My own approach to life is intellectual, artistic, philosophical. I find God in the growing mind and the understanding spirit of various people I meet, whether I meet them living in the body or in the pages of some old document reproduced by science to feed my soul. I find that God adapts Himself to each person and speaks to each man through t hematerials with which his mind works. Each man has a freedom within him which makes him a new, individual soul. He is "working out his own salvation." He has certain talents to use. God is with him as he expresses himself. God may be in nature or some other external revelation but man's knowledge of God depends upon his own response and reaction to these.

* * *

This idea of men's lives expressing God brings a change to my idea of Salvation and new meaning to the Continuity of History. I have believed in a sort of universalism in which I thought all people eventually came to the same identical unity, a merging with the one God, but now I believe in something I may call individual-salvation, or individual-theology, believing that each person has a different and necessary job in the salvation of the world. In other words, we—you and I, that is—must create our own salvation and thereby the salvation of the world by finding and doing our indispensable part of the world's work. People are not the same—ever!—and will not be as long as they are recognizable souls. The only possible unity of such individuals is through God but obviously never in God. Salvation depends upon my personal growth in my portion of the world.

* * *

What a change this makes in my idea of History! If each man is a necessary cell in the body of God's Purpose he has something to do which will have eternal significance—though infinitesimal, still absolute!—and each man has a part to play in influencing others, generating new men and women to extend God's work. History is not of forces or movements or races any more than the story of the body is of arms and legs and sudden reactions: the story of the body is one of individual cells multiplying, uniting with one another, forming ideas and feelings, and so the history of the universe is the work of individuals.

* * *

This idea adds to my conception of Sin and my idea of Future Glory. What a responsibility lies in the eternal significance of his life which a man born into

this world without asking cannot escape! There is the doctrine of election. But what a glorious task to fulfil if he chooses to do what he can, for just as in nature so in man, his powers increase as he seizes on his opportunities. There is the doctrine of the freedom of the will. In accepting this responsibility he finds his heaven and hell now and forever.

My form of expression leads me to new ideas, guiding me to understand. But in imagination I see that other people's religious expression is different. They are not aware of the inner need to understand why which burns within me. Sometimes they live in the materials of their work—as I live in words, in one sense,—and the art they produce tells their story. Sometimes they live in other people primarily, helping to lead them by quietness or sternness or the helping hand. Sometimes they live in perversity or laziness and do not express their souls in any way whatsoever, damning their immortal souls while God continues to give them a new chance. The truth is that we all share in these ends. One way leads a man to understand; another leads a man to do; still another urges a man to be. It seems to be true that each of us is satisfied spiritually when we carry out our own activities, asking no other recognition or recompense, feeling that we have seen our God when we have done our part.

* * *

I believe in the sermons which I preach, but I believe in them because they help me to understand. Some people believe only in those ideas which help them to do things—the "practical" religion—for them. Others believe only in those ideas which change a person from sin to righteousness and make him be something. I like to preach the sort of sermon which helps people to understand why. It seems all important to me; I do it naturally; I speak to those people who, like children at one stage of their life, are always asking "why?" Material questions are minor questions because I know those can be solved with or without my help; questions of helping other people should be referred to some one who can do it better than I; but when it comes to the individual understanding himself and the universe and God I worry and think and work.

Congregational - Christian Freedom

Richard H. Plock

Burlington, Iowa

IT is a paradox that the freedom enjoyed by the individual church of our denomination is its greatest source of strength and at the same time its greatest weakness. The membership of each of our churches is an autonomous body with full authority to select its own minister and govern its own affairs. Each association sets its own standards for the licensing and ordination of ministers in the churches of the association.

This freedom creates great potential power, and exemplifies true religious liberalism, which is grounded in a belief in the inherent dignity, strength and ability of the individual member. None of our members has to be perplexed by mediæval dogmas, doctrines, creeds or rituals. Each is free to find his own way to God, with the aid of the church. The potentialities of such unshackled minds are limitless. Obviously such a denomination requires an intelligent and well-trained ministry.

Our members are free, also, to be apathetic about church affairs, and therein lies our weakness. Freedom of religion presupposes some religion. Freedom of thought presumes some thought. Freedom

to manage one's own affairs implies a willingness to do so.

Some of our churches, realizing that they are free to call any one they choose into their pulpits, have, in their desperation done just that. Some associations, in their desperation, have licensed such persons and have made ordination trivial. This is an expensive luxury; and the price which the church pays is ultimately far greater than reasonable compensation would have been. An inadequate minister cannot strengthen, or even hold together, one of our congregations.

Our apathy with regard to the compensation of our ministers and their annuity program is responsible for keeping many of our finest young people out of the ministry. Our apathy with regard to ministerial standards is bringing to us, in their places, many who do not seem to understand Congregationalism. The Congregational Christian churches are not supplying sufficient students to the seminaries to fill their vacant pulpits.

Freedom to act is a priceless asset. Freedom to be apathetic is a lurking danger.

The Seminary Students Exchange

The Rev. John W. Abbott

Assistant Minister, Beneficent Church, Providence, R. I.

HOW does the modern theological seminary look upon its community? The contributions herewith presented are at least partially indicative of the following types of thinking in circulation: (1) The seminary looks upon its own organic community, and judges itself by the standards of contemporary education, the desires of the constituency of the major supporting denomination, or by the historical trends in its own background. Perhaps the most constructive processes in renewing the spiritual vigor of seminary education (if, indeed, renewal is needed) will come from the schools themselves.

(2) The seminary looks upon the corporate body of which it is the Lyceum, the church. If the material coming from these students is any indication, the ministers of the future are impatient with sectarianism and eager for union. But the ultimate test will be the way in which the insight of youth expands into maturity. Is it axiomatic that the wisdom of experience *must* whet enthusiasm, and create a rut of complacency and vested interests? If so, God save the church!

(3) The seminary looks upon the professions of Christian service. Reactions are invited on "Ministry by Cooperation," the most far-reaching realignment of responsibilities yet to be suggested by contributors. The further question should be posed: what effect does the conception of service have upon the means of recruiting for the ministry and related occupations?

(4) The seminary looks upon the society of which it is a part, attempting to answer the question: "By what means can the mind of a united group of Christians interact with the forces of public opinion in creating a new order?" This is the essence of social Christianity. But we also need to determine to what extent the seminary community should be a participant in the struggles of propaganda, race, and labor, as opposed to the easier role of the observer.

(5) The seminary looks upon its own mental processes, and attempts by synthesizing them to create intellectual integrity as well as positive action.

New correspondents for several seminaries will be announced in the next issue, the deadline for which is September 15. Address all communications to 300 Weybosset St., Providence, R. I.

J. W. A.

The Church and the Public Mind

Lewis Presnall

Chicago

[An Outline of the Chain of Thought by by which I would explain my conception of the relationship of the American Protestant Church to the current American scene.]

A. The Church understood as: (1) Separated from the state, yet vitally related to and influenced by the society which it, in turn, expects to influence; (2) A culture-conditioning institution which must act as a catalytic agent upon all the other institutions and relationships of society—its task with individuals is to "produce the producers" of tomorrow's world; (3) The expression of a universal gospel concerns itself with universal values and universal mankind; (4) An institution which seeks to foster voluntary responsibility of men for each other in all their complicated relationships.

B. The American culture seen as: (1) An experiment, upon a large scale, of democratic processes in human relationships; (2) Understandable only in the light of an understanding of the frontier and wilderness experiences characteristic of the United States; (3) A "melting pot" of peoples, ideas and religious customs from many lands; (4) A development of religious freedoms and tolerances—speech, assembly, the press—through the necessity for resolving the mortal conflicts between a multitude of faiths and creeds; (5) Related to the "free church" ideal which expresses the basis upon which the freedoms abovementioned rest.

C. How the Church relates itself to the public. (1) Must depend upon the Church's ability to grasp its task in the larger sense of community responsibility; (2) The teaching job of the church must be conducted in such a way that people are educated to community responsibility, rather than to mere "churchmanship" or to the preservation of a static creed; (3) The prophetic task of the Church lies not primarily in "pontificating" about social evils, but rather in stimulating the kind of voluntary cooperation which will help people to understand their own problems, diagnose their difficulties and develop solutions for themselves; (4) The public mind must be the instrument for changing itself. No amount of applying poultices to a sick society can substitute for producing the conditions within the body social that will produce health; (5) The leadership of the Church must raise up those questions which vitally concern the public and bring to bear upon those questions the light and resources of Christian faith. The Church needs to catch up with the felt and often unexpressed needs of her public; (6) The primary task of the Church in this regard is not social reconstruction, but social implementation. By this I mean that the Church cannot hope to further the Kingdom by constructing a new blueprint for society. But with an understanding and "know-how" of democracy the society itself can proceed to produce whatever new patterns are necessary; (7) Finally, in a world where the public is too often misinformed by its press, radio, and public school, the church must (a) endeavor to provide the missing information and (b) endeavor to encourage a better press, radio, movie, and school. In this effort the Church will seek to be a propagandist in every way possible, yet keeping in touch with the lives of her people lest she become detached from their real needs.

The Basis for a Christian World Brotherhood

Anita Koenig
Chicago Seminary

CHRISTIANS everywhere seem to have only one common element in their diverse approaches to God, and to Christ. This controlling factor is the *spirit* that is aroused through a common conviction that: (1) There is a God of love at work in the world today who constantly affects the interactions of man to man, and of man to things; (2) This God of love has a purpose for each one of us alone and collectively. Through his loving and compassionate spirit that was manifest in Jesus, we as men and as a "church" can have a positive effect upon our life and times; (3) Our differences are all valid approaches to this God of love, but we need a common searching ground, a common recognition that each is all, and that all is nothing without each.

If we are willing to grant our common ultimate purpose, then there follow certain discrepancies in a disunited Christianity. In many fields, we recognize that in isolation from one another we not only do not progress together, but we do not progress alone; in plain words, we hinder each other's progress. What are some of these fields? (1) In the mission field a united front is needed. From sad experiences we have found that the diversities that enrich religious expression at home only serve to confound our efforts abroad. (2) A common front is needed in our role as society's conscience. If we feel responsible for the condition in which our social order finds itself, then we need all the strength of our numbers to do something practical about our responsibility; (3) If a truly federated spirit is to be had, there must be some organic unity, so that the processes which make for creative interaction are not "gummed up" by mere numbers or heterogeneous quibblings.

If the church is to continue its prophetic role, it must not only preach about world federation among nations, but must start with itself, to show convincingly that a world consciousness is possible for man.

Paraphrase of Psalm 8

Don Kirkbride
Pacific School of Religion

BLINDED by the spotlight of his own self-adoration, modern man has failed to adore the God whose creative genius held the ancient Psalmist spellbound. Pride in his own creation, yes, even the scientific creation that threatens to destroy him, keeps him from knowing what the Psalmist means when he cries, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name." Blind, selfish, proud, petty modern man has a psalm all his own:

O Man, O Man, how wonderful thou art!

When I consider thy machines, thy weapons, and thy scientific knowledge, what is God that you tolerate him, or the Son of God that you still pretend to follow him?

For have you not overcome all of nature?

Have you not changed the courses of

mighty rivers that they might run your factories and your mills, that you might light your homes and make your whole existence more pleasant?

Have you not turned the gigantic trees of the forest into lumber for your buildings, into paper upon which to print your great knowledge?

Have you not taken resources from the very heart of the earth and turned them to your advantage?

Yes, you have even conquered the air and the sea by your ingenious mechanical devices.

Man, O Man, How excellent is thy name, O Man!

Consecration Service for One Taken Under Care of Association

As used by the Western Association, Missouri

For Either Men or Women

INVOCATION

O Almighty God, who makest us to will and to do of Thy good pleasure: give this servant of Thine about to be consecrated to full time Christian service grace truly to perform the solemn vows and promises now to made by him. Grant that he may become a faithful dispenser of Thy holy word and a faithful servant of Thy holy kingdom, and that he may be a continual example to the people committed to his charge; so that after this life is ended, together they may come to Thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"

THE EXHORTATION

Let us humbly confess our sins unto God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (People joining)

Most merciful God, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast promised forgiveness to all those who confess and forsake their sins: We come before Thee in a humble sense of our own unworthiness, acknowledging our manifold transgressions of Thy righteous laws. But, O gracious Father, who desirest not the death of a sinner, look upon us, we beseech Thee, in mercy, and forgive us all our transgressions; make us deeply sensible of the great evil of them and work in us a hearty contrition; that we may obtain forgiveness at Thy hands, who art ever ready to receive humble and penitent sinners; for the sake of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our only Savior and Redeemer. *Amen.*

SILENT MEDITATION

THE WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Jesus said: Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

Go ye therefore, and preach the gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

RESPONSIVE READING

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek;

He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of prison to them that are bound.

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of justice of our God.

To comfort all that mourn, to give to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

That they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

They shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with garments of salvation.

O Lord, Thou art my God; I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name; for Thou hast done wonderful things; Thy counsels of old are faithful and truth.

Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat.

It shall be said, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him and He will save us: This is our God; we have waited for Him. We will be glad and rejoice in our salvation.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE ONE TO BE TAKEN UNDER CARE OF ASSOCIATION

A MINISTER: I present unto you this person to be taken under care of our association as he prepares for full time Christian service.

THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT: We purpose, this day, God willing, to consecrate this person to full-time Christian service. For, after due examination, we find that he is indeed called to this work, and that he is a person meet for the same. But if there be any of you who knoweth any valid reason for which he should not be received into this holy calling, let him come forth in the name of God and disclose what that impediment is.

THE COLLECT

Almighty God, who by the Holy Spirit hast appointed servants for Thy Church, graciously behold this Thy servant, now called to full-time Christian service and so replenish him with the truth of Thy doctrine, and so adorn him with innocency of life, that both by word and good example he may faithfully serve Thee to the glory of Thy name and the advancement of Thy church, through the merits of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit, world without end. *Amen.*

THE EXAMINATION

Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to enter full-time

Christian service in the Church of Christ to serve God for the promo[illegible] glory and the edifying of His people?

ANS. I trust so.

Will you apply all diligence to frame and fashion your own life and the lives of others according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make yourself and them as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples of the flock of Christ?

ANS. I will endeavor to do so, the Lord being my helper.

THE CONSECRATION SENTENCES

We dedicate and consecrate thee, then, to the life of full-time Christian service in the Church of Christ; in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

THE COLLECT

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who of Thy great goodness hast vouchsafed to accept and take this Thy servant into the life of full-time Christian service in Thy church; make him, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to be modest, humble, and constant in her studies and preparation, and to have a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline; that, having always the testimony of a good conscience, and continuing ever stable and strong in his purposes that he may be found worthy to be called unto the high ministries in Thy Church, throughout the same, Thy Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor, world without end. *Amen.*

THE BLESSING

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doing, with Thy most gracious favor, and further us with Thy continual help; that in all our works, begun, continued and ended in Thee, we may glorify Thy Holy name, and finally, by Thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HYMN "Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart"